

Subject: SENATE BILL 42

Date: Sun, Jan 20, 2013 6:05 pm

Attachments: 2013_Funding_Papers(1).xlsx (731K),

0817928723_385_WHERE EVERYBODDY KNOWS YOUR NAME__ASB.pdf (499K),
TheRoadToTrust.pdf (471K)

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO.

5

DATE

4/21/13

BILL NO.

SB42

Robyn

I am attaching information that I would like to present to your Senate Education committee tomorrow at the 3pm meeting.

Please review and forward to your committee members as you deem appropriate.

School District #2 (Elementary and High School) is sending separate information as to their position on Senate Bill 42.

I will be testifying as an individual parent and taxpayer representing 30 plus years of experience in school funding and effective education delivery to our K12 students. As you know, I believe that it is the State's Constitutional responsibility to fund education equitably and it is the "school" board's Constitutional responsibility to supervise the effective delivery and spending of federal, state and local funding.

I am sending two "educationally relevant principles" articles that appeared in the American School Board Journal. They summarize our most important principles for successful K12 education -- they can increase our urban graduation rates to the enviable and excellent levels of our rural Montana high schools.

I am also sending a per student summary of all of the 2012 budgeted funding of our K12 school districts.

Please note that we continue to unfairly discriminate in our state funding levels and in our permitted total funding. If you were to add the graduation or completion rates on to this spreadsheet you would see that generally, the smaller the school the higher the graduation rates.

These schedules reflect the "weighted" funding formula created in 1993 by House Bill 667, which I supported, both as President of the Montana School Board Association and as a parent and taxpayer. But, the goal of HB667 - Equitable and Adequate State Funding for all Budgeted Funds as Defined by the

Legislature and allowing for up to an additional 25% local funding -- that goal was never implemented, and has, in fact, been frustrated since the end of the original 6 year phase-in of the Maximum budget allowances.

Your "per school program" basic entitlement is most important for equity for all schools and students across Montana, whether urban or rural. I would be happy to discuss the value of that provision to communities like Lockwood or East Helena or Hellgate Elementary or Evergreen, who cannot educate their high school kids at home because they are "feeder" communities to high school districts that cannot afford to open a small high school, let alone operate it with all the efficiencies of scale and performance that come with a small high school of 400 or less students.

(If that "per school program" basic entitlement cannot survive the assault of the Montana Rural Education Association and its cohorts, then perhaps the successors to the honorable Judges Loble or Sherlock and the Montana Supreme Court will determine that the basic "school district" entitlement is unconstitutional and unacceptable in any form of inequity and get rid of it completely.)

Please also note that more recent school funding legislation required urban funding to be reviewed every 10 years as to effectiveness and adequacy. Senate Bill 42 will go along way to address the present urban funding shortcomings without infringing on rural school funding.

Finally, it is confusing to see that the MREA supports the federal "All Children Are Equal Act" but continue to oppose the idea that Montana school children should be funded "equally". In that vein of thought I will be presenting the Senate Education committee with a new book "Visions and Voices: Montana's One-Room School Houses" by Charlotte Caldwell for you and your members to consider the real values of a school where everybody knows your name or where the children and their families follow the road to trust.

Thank you for this opportunity to support the improvement of Montana's education funding statutes for all of our students.

Thanks
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